United Nations S/2001/790

Security Council

Distr.: General
15 August 2001
English
Original: French

Letter dated 8 August 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on the escalation of violence in the Middle East issued on 1 August 2001 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean **De Ruyt**
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 8 August 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement on the escalation of violence in the Middle East issued on 1 August 2001 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The Presidency of the European Union expresses its deepest concern in view of the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East and the renewed escalation of violence of the last few days, which further complicate the current diplomatic efforts aiming at relaunching the political process.

The Presidency urges all parties to show maximum restraint and to make concrete and immediate gestures in order to meet the expectations of the international community as largely reflected in the conclusions of the General Affairs Council of the European Union of 16 July (see S/2001/728) and the summit declaration of 21 July of the group of seven major industrialized nations and the Russian Federation (G8).

The Presidency stresses the European Union's conviction as to the urgency of the full implementation of the Mitchell recommendations as well as to the interest of both parties in actively cooperating to the rapid establishment of a third-party monitoring mechanism.

The Presidency is disturbed by the killing of eight Palestinians in the West Bank on 31 July, and the report of the death of two children near the explosion.

The Presidency reiterates the European Union's rejection of targeted assassinations of Palestinian militants by Israel, which are illegal under international law. Unilateral provocative actions of that kind can only lead to further escalation and therefore postpone a return to a situation of calm.

The Presidency exhorts the Palestinian Authority to intensify with unfailing determination its efforts against extremist violence and terrorism.

The Presidency cannot but deplore the killing and wounding of innocent civilians caught in the current confrontations.